

Hurricane Katrina Talking Points 6 September 2005

The Overall Mission

Our three priorities are:

- First, saving lives and finding people,
- Second, sustaining lives (water and shelter) and
- Third Setting conditions for recovery (draining water and removing debris).

Un-Watering New Orleans

We are doing everything we can to get the water out of New Orleans as quickly as possible. We will provide the public with daily updates on our progress. This is a very complex mission.

Estimates about how long it will take to get the water out of New Orleans are very difficult because conditions are changing daily. As more power is restored and more pump stations become operational, and as temporary pumps are placed, we get closer and closer to making New Orleans dry again.

We have information about specific areas.

When all pumps are operational, we estimate the following areas will be dry in the number of days listed:

- Orleans East Bank - 24 days
- New Orleans East - 62 days
- Challmette - 80 days
- Challmette Extension - 36 days

Water Quality Issues

Everyone is concerned about the quality of the water being moved from from New Orleans to Lake Ponchartrain but our first concern is to get the water out of the city. We have worked with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and we have received approval to move these waters. The water is being tested and monitored. As we drain the water, we anticipate that there will be some times when we may need to take additional measures, and we are working that right now. Any questions as to water quality should be referred to the Office of Water, US Environmental Protection Agency which is monitoring the situation.

Navigation

The Mississippi River is open to shallow draft traffic and to deep draft vessels to 39 -foot draft during daylight only.